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PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
GENEVA

STATEMENT BY THE INDONESIAN OBSERVER DELEGATION

ON ITEM 12

Madam Chairman,

Speaking on behalf of the Twelve, the Foreign Minister of Ireland has rightly observed that "All human rights and fundamental freedoms are indivisible and interrelated. The promotion of economic, social and cultural rights as well as of civil and political rights is of paramount importance for the full realization of human dignity and for the attainment of the legitimate aspirations of every individual. Emphasis on one aspect of human rights at the expense of another cannot be justified." My Delegation could not agree more with this observation since it places the human being at the centre of our common concern. In accordance with this premise, Indonesia's National Development Plan defines development as development of the Indonesian Man as a whole in all aspects of life and the betterment of the entire Indonesian society.

Following the logic of the principle of indivisibility, any attempt to present a picture of the human rights situation in one country by emphasizing only one aspect is therefore misleading. Even more so if the attempt does not genuinely concern human rights per se, but is politically motivated. Hence, it is to be regretted that certain delegations have attempted to present a gloomy picture of the situation in Indonesia, by putting emphasis on only one aspect of human rights.

This is clearly so in the case of the province of East Timor. The statements delivered were more often than not an exploitation of simple and isolated incidents, that could happen

in any other part of the world, yet are considered by certain speakers as a gross violation of human rights.

Indeed, in observing the human rights situation in East Timor the speakers seem to have only one aim, that is, to project an overall picture by selecting negative elements such as torture, detention without trial or disappearances -which do not necessarily exist- while ignoring others such as the right to development, the right to adequate food and shelter, the right to health, the right to education etc.

Madam Chairman,

In order to provide a clearer picture of the facts, it is only fair to allow my Delegation to give a brief account of the situation in East Timor from our perspective and, more importantly, from the perspective of a native of East Timor. But first permit me to introduce myself.

I am Lopes da Cruz, born and raised in East Timor. I was the former chairman of UDT which was the largest among the five political parties existing in East Timor during the process of decolonisation. I was there throughout the darkest days in the history of the territory, when the people were subjected to brutal terror and repression by a minority group. I shared with my people the agony and suffering of civil strife and together with them we struggled and decided to integrate with the Republic of Indonesia. This decision was the choice of the overwhelming majority of the people of East Timor. I had the privilege of

serving as Deputy Governor of the Province of East Timor and currently, I am one of the 40 members of the Indonesian Supreme Advisory Council, as well as a member of the People's Consultative Assembly. I am now speaking as a member of the Indonesian Observer Delegation to this Commission, and I do so, Madam Chairman, with great pride and honour.

Returning to the item under consideration, it is not my intention to dwell at length on my Delegation's position on the process of self-determination of East Timor which was discussed under item 9. The only problem we are facing now, if it can be regarded as such, is how to improve the living standards of the people in the sense that each person can enjoy all aspects of human rights without emphasizing one element alone in line with the above mentioned National Development Plan. In this regard, my Delegation welcomes any genuine concern from all sides.

It has to be noted, however, that even though much still needs to be improved, in the 14 year period since integration, the Government of Indonesia has done its utmost for the benefit of the East Timorese people, physically and materially, as well as spiritually. The area which was once plagued by famine is now self sufficient in rice. With regard to the right to education, there is now a primary school in every village, over a hundred high and vocational schools and even a university. In the near future, Indonesia will be elevating compulsory education to high school level. In this regard, the Province of East Timor will be given priority in its implementation. Due to the limit of time I do not want to go into detail on the statistics, but simply to

refer to the conclusion of independent observers that there are indeed improvements in all aspects of human rights in their totality.

In fact, the elevation of the status of East Timor as of 1 January 1989, in a way reflects the recognition of the success of the development efforts in the province. Hence, the province can now stand on an equal footing with other provinces in Indonesia. As a consequence, East Timor also has to be treated in the same way as the other provinces with all Indonesian laws and regulations applicable. The so called military presence in East Timor which has often been the target of criticism from several quarters, has to be seen in that perspective. It is to be underlined that the military presence in East Timor is comparable to that in Indonesia's other provinces. It should, moreover, be understood that the main task of the Indonesian Armed Forces is not only for national defense but also to actively participate in the process of national development.

On the issue of freedom of movement which it was alleged is still being hampered, it should be noted that the Government of Indonesia has extended visa exemptions to tourists from 30 countries for a duration of stay for as long as two months. The Government has also abolished the requirement of an exit permit for all Indonesians to travel overseas, except for civil servants and members of the armed forces. Being on the same footing as other provinces, those Government decisions and other provisions regarding the freedom of movement, are naturally also applicable to East Timor. I would underline therefore that freedom of movement in East Timor is far from being restricted.

Visits of foreign dignitaries, humanitarian organizations, foreign football teams, as well as tourists and journalists, are all evidence of this freedom. In fact, there is no other area of a similar size in Indonesia, perhaps with the exception of Bali which is so frequently visited by foreigners as East Timor. In 1989 alone, no less than 6.190 tourists visited the province, which was a considerable increase compared to the year before. In addition to the above, more than 300 foreign journalists came to East Timor during the visit of Pope John Paul II which is contrary to the reports that there were restrictions on travel beyond the itinerary of the Pope's visit. If certain areas are still not designated as official tourist destinations it is primarily due to the lack of physical infrastructure. This does not apply to the province of East Timor alone but to other provinces in Indonesia as well.

Madam Chairman,

With regard to the allegation of human rights violations in Indonesia, my Government has always co-operated with the Human Rights Commission and its subsidiary bodies and has done its utmost to reply to communications submitted on this matter. This approach is well appreciated by the respective bodies as reflected in their reports.

Before concluding, allow me to refer to recent reports which alleged that there were violations of human rights during the Pope's visit to Indonesia including East Timor last October and

during the visit of the United States Ambassador last month. Again, the real facts have been blown out of all proportion. Published documents and other reliable sources which state the contrary speak for themselves.

Madam Chairman,

Expressions of international concern of human rights situation in any part of the world has, to a certain degree, contributed positively to the improvement of human rights; but ultimately it is the state concerned which has the responsibility to improve human rights of its people. In this regard, my Delegation welcomes those who have preferred the approach of dialogue and who wish to contribute to our efforts in promoting the enjoyment of human rights in Indonesia in all its aspects.

As a final word, Madam Chairman, it is my Delegation's hope that the points of this statement, particulary those pertaining to allegations of violations of human rights and restrictions of access to East Timor, would answer all the statements made by several representatives, including that of the distinguished representative of Ireland speaking on behalf of the European Community.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.